

**Listing of Claims**

1-24. Cancelled.

25. (Previously Amended) A portable computer, comprising:  
a base having casing and a chassis, the casing being configured to house various components that provide computing operations for the portable computer, and the chassis being configured to support the casing, the casing and chassis having interior portions that define an enclosed region inside the base; and  
an enclosureless optical disc drive having drive components and frame components configured to support the drive components, the frame components taking the form of a skeletal system, the enclosureless optical disc drive being disposed inside the enclosed region of the base, the enclosed region being arranged to surround a substantial portion of the enclosureless optical disc drive so as to shield the enclosureless optical disc drive from internal and external hazards capable of passing through the skeletal system of the frame components.
26. (Original) The portable computer as recited in claim 25 wherein the chassis includes a plurality of ribs, and wherein at least one of the ribs forms a wall of the enclosed region.
27. (Original) The portable computer as recited in claim 26 wherein the casing includes a plurality of casing walls, and wherein at least one of the casing walls forms a wall of the enclosed region.
28. (Original) The portable computer as recited in claim 27 wherein the casing and chassis include a top wall for enclosing a top portion of the enclosureless optical disc drive, a bottom wall for enclosing a bottom portion of the enclosureless optical disc drive, a front wall for enclosing a front portion of the enclosureless optical disc drive, a first side wall for enclosing a first side portion of the enclosureless optical disc drive, a second side wall for enclosing a second side portion of the enclosureless optical disc drive, and a back wall for enclosing a back portion of the enclosureless optical disc drive.
29. (Previously Amended) The portable computer as recited in claim 25 further comprising a thin flexible boot configured to surround at least a portion of the enclosureless optical disc drive so as to prevent particles from reaching the drive components.

30. (Previously Amended) The portable computer as recited in claim 25 wherein the frame component includes a bottom plate and a top plate, the top plate being attached to the bottom plate via a plurality of structural arms extending therebetween, the bottom plate being configured to support the drive components, and the top plate being configured in part to block laser light from emitting from the enclosureless optical disc drive.

31. (Previously Amended) The portable computer as recited in claim 25 wherein the internal portions of the casing and chassis that form the enclosed region are configured to shield electronic emissions therein.

32. (Previously Amended) The portable computer as recited in claim 25 wherein the chassis is disposed within the casing of the portable computer.

33. (Previously Amended) The portable computer as recited in claim 25 wherein the enclosed region shields the enclosureless optical disc drive from dust.

34. (Previously Amended) The portable computer as recited in claim 25 wherein the enclosed region shields laser emissions.

35. (Previously Amended) The portable computer as recited in claim 25 wherein the optical disc drive is a CD/DVD drive.

36. (Previously Amended) The portable computer as recited in claim 35 wherein the CD/DVD drive is a slot loaded CD/DVD drive.

37-59. (Cancelled)

60. (Previously Added) The portable computer as recited in claim 25 wherein the skeletal system includes openings that allow passage of internal and external hazards to and from the drive components.

61. (Previously Added) The portable computer as recited in claim 30 wherein the bottom and top plate are formed from metal.

62. (Previously Added) The portable computer as recited in claim 61 wherein the bottom plate is formed from stainless steel and the top plate is formed from aluminum.

63. (Presently Amended) The portable computer as recited in claim 29 wherein the thin flexible boot is formed from a MYLAR Mylar.

64. (Previously Added) The portable computer as recited in claim 29 wherein the thin flexible boot is sized to fit over the frame components so as to cover exposed portions of the enclosureless optical disc drive.

65. (Previously Added) The portable computer as recited in claim 28 wherein the top, bottom, front and first side walls are formed by the casing, and the back and second side walls are formed by the chassis.

66. (Previously Added) A portable computer, comprising:

a base having a casing and a chassis disposed within the casing, the casing being configured to house various components that provide computing operations for the portable computer, the casing and chassis defining an enclosed region inside the base for receiving a component of the portable computer, the enclosed region providing a sealed environment for the component disposed therein; and

an optical drive including internal components and frame components configured to support the internal components, the frame components having one or more openings that leave at least a portion of the internal components of the optical drive exposed, the optical drive being disposed inside the enclosed region of the base, the enclosed region being dimensioned to surround the peripheral regions of the optical drive so as to cover at least the exposed portions of the optical drive and to shield the optical drive from internal and external hazards.

67. (Previously Added) The portable computer as recited in claim 65 wherein the frame member includes a base member and a top cover, the combination of which leaves the one or more openings, the base member being configured to support the internal components of the optical drive and the top cover being configured to cover a portion of the internal components of the optical drive, the base member including a base portion and side portions extending therefrom, the side portions including a flange portion for receiving a bottom surface of the top cover.

68. (Previously Added) The portable computer as recited in claim 67 wherein the flange portions include a threaded receptacle for receiving a screw so as to attach the top cover to the base member.

69. (Previously Added) The portable computer as recited in claim 67 wherein the top cover includes an extension for blocking laser light from emanating outside the optical drive.

70. (Previously Added) The portable computer as recited in claim 66 wherein the openings are provided to reduce the overall weight of the optical drive.

71. (Previously Added) The portable computer as recited in claim 67 further including a flexible sheath for surrounding at least a portion of the optical drive in order to prevent dust and loose particles from reaching the internal components of the optical drive wherein the thin flexible sheath is sized to fit over the frame components so as to cover exposed portions of the optical drive.

72. (Previously Added) The portable computer as recited in claim 71 wherein the flexible sheath is sized to fit over base member, top cover and side portions of the optical drive so as to cover exposed parts of the sides, top, bottom and backside of the optical drive.

73. (Previously Added) The portable computer as recited in claim 66 wherein the frame components take the form of a skeletal system including openings that allow passage of internal and external hazards to and from the optical drive.